



**Public Hearing Testimony: Senate Bill 979: An Act Promoting Energy Affordability,
Energy Efficiency and Green Cities**

Chairs and members of the Environment Committee,

I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill 979 as written, and ask the bill be amended to strike Section 4 to eliminate the stretch code provisions.

I am a home builder of both single family and multifamily homes in Hartford County. We build both market rate and affordable homes. Over 30 years we have constructed nearly 1,000 homes. We are a certified Green Professional and a leader in green construction in the building community.

Cost VS Benefit

This incremental benefit is extremely small in carbon reduction considering new homes are already being built using 80% less energy than existing homes and a infinitesimal percentage of total energy use. The cost of this requirement at this time is way beyond the benefit compared to the cost.

The cost of an "affordable home" (1,500 Square feet) will go up by 20% or more! This added cost of over \$40,000 would be spent on tighter construction, higher cost of equipment, and installed solar or some other renewable source of energy. A 20% or higher cost increase will shut down the market for this size home.

Affect on home building in Connecticut

Section 4 of this bill will have a serious effect on my business. In fact, if municipalities are allowed to adopt this extreme provision requiring "net zero energy over the course of a year" as stated in the IECC Zero Energy Appendix, it will have the following consequences.:

The cost of an "affordable home" (1,500 – 2,000 Square feet) will go up by 20% or more! This added cost of over \$40,000 on the smallest home would be spent on tighter construction, higher cost of equipment, and installed solar or some other renewable source of energy. A cost increase like this will exasperate the new construction market for this size home. Connecticut needs more smaller homes, and this will stop or severely slow down that production.

It will also ruin the financial viability of apartment construction resulting in shutting down all market rate apartment construction. Again – this is the opposite of what the Governor's vision is for more desperately needed housing.



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Tool for towns to Legally Discriminate and STOP DEVELOPMENT

This bill is discriminatory as it severely penalizes lower cost homes and apartments on a percentage basis. This stretch code provision will give towns who want to shut down lower cost housing construction **for exclusionary reasons a perfect tool to do so!** It would also severely hamper or stop 830-g development without having to change the 830-g statute. Wealthy towns will quickly adopt this requirement.

This stretch code provision abandons our time tested Code Process

Connecticut already has a time-tested State code adoption process where all municipalities follow the same building code making a level playing field for development throughout the state. Connecticut already has one of the most energy efficient codes in the Country! We just adopted the 2021 family of codes 5 months ago!

Focus efforts on Existing Homes

Connecticut has one of the oldest and most inefficient housing stocks in the country. Policymakers must focus on weatherizing and retrofitting the existing housing stock to get significant reductions in carbon emissions. It is also the right thing to do from an environmental justice perspective as our most vulnerable populations live in these older units.

I urge this Committee to look honestly at the significant negative impacts, very insignificant carbon reduction, and reject SB 979 unless amended to strike Section 4.



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